Nuclear reactors of Pakistan

†2915. DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:
SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a declaration has been made, recently, by Pakistan that nuclear reactors would be used for making ammunitions;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto;

(c) whether the attention of the world has been drawn toward the crisis likely to take place due to this declaration by Government; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI ANAND SHARMA): (a) to (d) A US based non-governmental Institute for Science and International Security (ISIS) in a recent report stated that Pakistan was making a second heavy water production reactor inside the Khushab nuclear complex which was capable of producing enough plutonium for 40 to 50 nuclear weapons a year. Pakistani Ambassador to Washington Mahmud Ali Durrani in an interview to "The Washington Times" on 4 August 2006 however stated that the ISIS report was grossly exaggerated. He also stated that "the plutonium may certainly be used for military purposes, but it is simply not the case that it will increase our capability X-fold." The ISIS report was subsequently disputed by the US National Security Council. According to a New York Times report of August 3, 2006, US National Security Council Spokesman Frederick Jones said that "US Government experts believe that the reactor is expected to be substantially smaller and less capable that reported."

Government constantly monitors all developments that have a bearing on India's security environment and is committed to taking all necessary steps to safeguard the nation's security.

Visa to Nigerians

†2916. SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Nigerians granted visa for visting India during the last two years;

(b) number of persons out of above arrested for criminal activities; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) whether Government propose to make the provisions relating to issue of visa for Nigerians more stringent because of their involvement in criminal activities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) Indian Missions/Posts abroad have issued 7908 and 9769 visas in 2004 and 2005 respectively to Nigerian nationals.

(b) and (c) The requisite information is being obtained from the Ministry of Home Affairs and will be tabled in the House as early as possible.

Russian scholars

2917. SHRIMATI HEMA MALINI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of Russian scholars are working on India-related problems:

(b) if so, the details of those specific problems;

(c) in what manner India would be benefited by the results;

(d) whether Government are considering to invite those scholars; and

(e) if so, the time period thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI ANAND SHARMA): (a) to (e) Several academic institutions in Russia have scholars dedicated to India-related studies, aspects of which include Indian languages, literature and culture, philosophy and history, the Indian political system and socio-economic issues. India's foreign policy, international relations and Indo-Russian relations form other areas of interest for Russian scholars. Sustaining and consolidating Russian academia's linkages with India, continues to be one of the important elements of our overall diplomacy in Russia since interaction enhances the level of knowledge, understanding and appreciation of India, Institutionalised exchange programmes between some Russian and Indian institutes enable Russian scholars to visit India regularly in order to keep pace with fresh research, information and developments and to work closely with their Indian counterparts.

Mutual legal assistance treaty

2918. SHRI R. SHUNMUGASUNDARAM: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) is there a Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT) entered into with Pakistan for investigation and arrest in Criminal matter; and